

# **MINUTES**

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TASK FORCE**

Tuesday July 22, 2008  
2:00 PM  
Council Chambers  
Municipal Building  
93 Cottage Street  
Bar Harbor, Maine

### **I. Call to Order**

*Members present: Pat Samuel – Chair, Francine Carrarro, Barry Teater, James Houghton (Howdy)*

### **II. Excused Absences**

*David Towle was excused on a motion made by Houghton and seconded by Teater.*

### **III. Minutes**

*May 2008 minutes were approved on a motion from Houghton and seconded by Carrarro.*

The June 2008 minutes was tabled for editing.

### **IV. Staff Reports**

#### **A. Coordination with Cruise Ship Study Task Force**

Krieg reviewed map work for cruise ship passengers, the additional bus stop on Mount Desert Street and the new fees structure.

### **V. Regular Business**

#### **A. Discussion of new developments in downtown**

Krieg reviewed letter to Tom Walsh (Ocean Properties) she wrote to open up communication on possible re-development of West, Main and Rodick streets.

*Priorities of Task Force were discussed for this agenda business item:*

- Local retail stores instead of national chains
- Replacement of lost housing stock
- Appearance, aesthetic quality
- Monopolizing hotel industry pushing out independent operators – discussion of policy - what is the demonstrated need for hotel rooms? What happens if the market collapses? Or if the company collapses? Will there be year-round uses? Street-level? Convention space?
- Identity of the town – gateway to Park but needs year round identity
- Development needs Congruent with scale and character of the Town – anonymous or generic quality would be a detriment

- Height requirements were discussed – the existing height of Quarterdeck was questioned
- Parking garage – empty skeleton in winter unless companion uses are located there (boat storage, e.g.) – should be a priority for a joint venture

## **B. Downtown Business I and II and Shoreland General Development districting**

Krieg reviewed different approaches to redistricting as a project. The group should discuss issues and what the goals of zoning here are meant to be.

*Comments included allowances for:*

- Outdoor sales/events
- Farmer's markets

*Issues surrounding this allowance include:*

- Clarification of the permanent structures for businesses requirement
- Businesses that add to tourism experience or promote daily needs for goods for year-round activity
- Businesses existing in the area may say “we pay property taxes, they do not”, “they are taking businesses away from me”
- Panhandling issues
- Noise issues

*Other thoughts associated with outdoor events*

- Zone specific areas to allow events
- Village Green as an allowed space for performances
- Bar Harbor non-profits can use it only
- Art show discussed to determine if this event can be expanded
- Special events as opposed to everyday occurrences
- Use of athletic field – deed restricts but there is a clause of celebratory events so some more use beyond July 4<sup>th</sup> could be explored
- Music festivals
- Not enough events for free to the public
- Management and operations needs
- Need guidelines – eg no alcohol
- Year-round businesses – how do we define that in zoning?
- What is lacking for tourists? – night time activities – more events in the Village Green, why not every night there?

- Families on vacation need things to do at night – outdoor performers – jugglers and such –
- Joint efforts with the Chamber

*Other communities with examples to emulate:*

- Key West night festivals
- Venice, Florida – street performer, designated area, schedule, quality control and diversity of types through auditions – can put the hat out for donations
- Jackson Hole, Wyoming – shoot out at night in summer – in winter, skating rink in the green
- Belfast, Maine – more evening activity, more public art

*Generally, the Task Force noted:*

- The island is full of un-promoted artists
- Need to attract more buyers of the arts – Craft Fair numbers are down

*Possible locations for events include:*

- Village Green/Agamont/Town Pier
- Bar Harbor Merchant's Association – yard sale – should we do more? – also working on a First Night event
- First National Parking lot
- Grant's Park
- Outdoor film spaces – film festival

*Other thoughts for discussions included:*

- What businesses do we want to encourage? Arts buildings – let the market prevail?
- Maps? What do we want to do with maps?

Krieg also discussed parking requirements.

Ways to encourage certain uses is to limit permitting requirements. A town can also assign core areas for goods & services and limit hotels to certain areas within a district.

The group indicated we need a defensible list of year round businesses. We could work with banks to extend loan terms more comfortably for winterizing properties.

Krieg will assign to staff to derive a list. She also directed attention to Comp Plan pieces.

The group also discussed dances that used to occur and vacancy rates.

### **C. Quarterly Report to Town Council August 5, 2008**

## **VI. Public Comment**

No public comment.

**VII. Matters for Next Meeting**

**A. Request for Proposals for Economic Development Plan work**

**B. Update on Signage Project**

**VIII. Confirm Date/Time/Location for Next Meeting**

**A. August 19, 2008**

**IX. Adjournment at 3:40 PM**

These minutes were prepared by Anne Krieg, Planning Director for task force review at their meeting October 7, 2008.